



# CITY OF LODI

## COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

AGENDA TITLE: Cherokee Lane Median Update

MEETING DATE: August 6, 1997

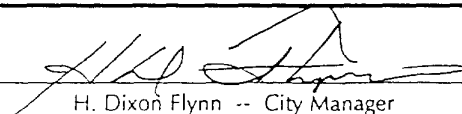
PREPARED BY: Public Works Director

RECOMMENDED ACTION: That the City Council direct staff on the completion of the Cherokee Lane median.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: At a recent Council shirtsleeve session regarding the design of the Cherokee Lane median, staff was requested to reexamine alternatives to the design of the median surface and landscaping. The main issue was concern over the planned use of rock to border the hedge-like plants and oak trees located in the center of the median. The following options have been identified and roughly priced:

1. Leave the design as originally approved (increased cost: \$0). This design, with Valley Oak trees, white bollards, a low center hedge and rock border, appears to be the most economical in terms of both first cost and maintenance. It also is in keeping with the relatively dry, simple Central Valley median that was in place along Cherokee Lane south of Delores Street, although that median was very old and in need of a major overhaul. The plants and irrigation system will be much less likely to damage the pavement than the other alternatives and the rock will be relatively easy to clean and maintain.
2. Leave the design but use smaller rock (increased cost: \$48,000). The main concern over the use of rock had to do with possible throwing by children who may be out in the median. Smaller rock would lessen that potential, but smaller crushed rock generally costs more given the extra work in crushing and grading. (Round rock is not considered advisable since it will not be as stable when placed and is more likely to be blown into the street.) Since we have experienced very little rock-throwing problems from the many railroad rights of way that cross town, it is arguable just how serious a problem this might be. Maintenance costs for this alternative may be slightly higher than the design since smaller rock would be more prone to scattering onto the pavement.
3. Change the plants to one which would spread over the median, modify the irrigation system and substitute some type of organic mulch for the rock (increased cost: \$110,000). A low plant that would spread across the median would still need some type of mulch to retard weed growth and reduce dust. Organic mulches, such as shredded cedar bark, would need replacement far more often than rock, thus increasing the maintenance cost. Some types (such as "gorilla hair" which is what was used at the landscaping near the back door of City Hall) are more difficult to clean since debris

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

  
H. Dixon Flynn -- City Manager

becomes trapped in it. And, unless a treated wood is used, they are flammable. Bark is prone to floating, which makes it unacceptable since the medians are lower than the pavement and act as drainage swales.

Proper installation of a spreading ground cover requires modification of the irrigation system to allow more plants to be installed. The present design calls for five-gallon plants in the center of the median about five feet apart. This alternative would provide one-gallon plants on a four-foot triangular spacing which would require only minimal changes to the irrigation system. A related alternative was considered in which the plants would be changed to a spreading type but left at the same spacing and size. The thought was that eventually the plants would grow to cover the median. However, this would take much longer and, without changes to the irrigation system, the plant selection is more limited and will never achieve the same appearance as a more evenly spaced planting.

Another point that has complicated the issue is that at this time of year, and for the quantities needed, plant selection is very limited. This means that even if we decide on an alternate plant and find the money, we may not be able to complete the project this year.

Given the costs involved, both initial and long-term maintenance, and the lack of previous problems with rock throwing, staff recommends the project proceed as originally designed.

FUNDING: To be determined.



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JLR/RCP/lm

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